

APPENDIX A Policy PER-14  
Gravenhurst Public Library  
Workplace Violence Prevention Program



**A. Plan for Maintaining Security in the Library**

1. The library staff will conduct a worksite assessment annually to ensure measures for violence prevention are effective. The assessment will:
  - a. identify jobs or locations with the greatest risk
  - b. identify high risk factors
  - c. include a physical workplace security audit
  - d. evaluate the effectiveness of existing security measures
2. The CEO/Chief Librarian, or designate, will annually review the history of past incidents to identify patterns or trends.
3. The CEO/Chief Librarian, or designate will annually review the previously recognized areas of higher risk in the library including:
  - a. ongoing contact with the public
  - b. working alone or in small numbers
  - c. the circulation desk where money is kept
  - d. closing the library building at night
  - e. monitoring of secondary entrances to the library

**B. Measures for Reducing the Risk of Workplace Violence**

1. Learn to recognize the signs of violence. Early identification and prevention of violence in the workplace is encouraged. Potential threats of violence that should be reported could include the following:
  - a. threatening statements to do harm to self or others
  - b. reference to other incidents of violence
  - c. confrontational behaviour
  - d. major change in personality, mood or behaviour
  - e. substance abuse
2. Institute general measures to reduce risk including:
  - a. designate the CEO/Chief Librarian's office and staff room (rooms with doors that lock and telephone) as emergency safe rooms
  - b. keep all secondary entrance doors locked, but with 'crash bars'
  - c. keep the exterior lights around the building in good working order
  - d. ensure staff will not work alone in the library without prior consent of the CEO/Chief Librarian

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3. Staff procedures to increase personal safety:
  - a. Notice your surroundings and report any unsafe or dangerous situation to the most senior staff member.
  - b. If you feel uncomfortable about a person who has entered the library, trust your instincts. If you feel threatened, make a scene - YELL!
  - c. Use a buddy system when leaving work.
  - d. If you ever find you are working alone in the library, let the CEO/Chief Librarian, or someone at home know the situation and tell him or her when you expect to leave.
  - e. If you enter a bathroom and suspect it is unsafe, do not call out. Back out, go to a safe, lockable place with telephone and call for help.
  - f. Know the nearest exit or room with a lock.
  
4. Staff procedures for threatening behaviour:
  - a. Do not argue with a threatening person. Identify yourself as a library staff member. Remain calm and keep your voice low and firm.
  - b. Do not put yourself or others in danger. Keep a distance of four feet.
  - c. Be friendly but firm, introduce yourself, look at the person while you talk to him/her, let the person talk, clarify the problem and offer solutions.
  - d. Get assistance from another staff person.
  - e. Advise him/her that the police will be called if the abuse does not stop.
  - f. If the behaviour does not change, call the police.**
  - g. Notify the CEO/Chief Librarian or designate. Keep the Health and Safety Staff representative informed as needed.
  
5. Staff procedures for dealing with violence/assault:
  - a. If you hear raised voices or sounds of a scuffle investigate.
  - b. If you witness violence or an assault call the police and describe the situation.**
  - c. Recruit other staff to move others out of the way to a safer location.
  - d. Do not block exits to prevent a threatening/violent person from leaving the building.
  - e. Do not invade the personal space of the threatening person.
  - f. Do not get between two people fighting.
  - g. Notice details so you can describe the situation to the police.
  - h. Notify the CEO/Chief Librarian. Keep the Health and Safety Staff representative informed as needed.

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6. Domestic Violence: Steps to Increase Your Personal Safety
  - a. Tell someone at work about your situation.
  - b. Make up a "code word" for co-workers so they know when to call for help.
  - c. Ask your co-workers to screen your calls and visitors.
  - d. Ask a co-worker to call the police if your abuser is bothering you.

**C. How to report a situation:**

1. A report should be made as soon as possible after an action or behaviour occurred.
2. An informal, verbal complaint may be brought forward to the CEO/Chief Librarian. It is in the best interest of all concerned that a report be written.
3. If a formal complaint is requested, the employee must file a written report with the CEO/Chief Librarian
4. The report should include a brief statement of the incident, when it occurred, where it occurred, date and time it occurred, the person(s) involved and the names of any witnesses if any.

**D. Investigation and Dealing with Incidents or Complaints**

1. After receiving a report, the CEO/Chief Librarian or designate will complete an investigation as quickly as possible, depending on the nature and severity of the issue. This will include interviews with the employee, the alleged perpetrator, if a staff member, and any witnesses.
2. The results of the investigation will be discussed with the employee and recommended preventative actions and/or resolutions presented.
3. A separate meeting will be held with the alleged perpetrator, if a staff member.
4. If the findings do not support the allegations the CEO/Chief Librarian will recommend that no further action is necessary and that the matter be closed.
5. Should the investigation conclude that there is evidence of misconduct the CEO/Chief Librarian will prescribe a resolution that may include police intervention.
6. Employees who are found to have made false or malicious complaints will be subject to disciplinary action.
7. If an employee makes a complaint in good faith and without malice, regardless of the outcome of the investigation, they will not be subject to any form of discipline.